A REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, January 18. 1709.

IN my Laſt I told you a very terrible Story, I confeſs, a Story that has in it ſomething very melancholly, as well as ſomething ſurprizing— It is melancholly to reflect, that in a Land of ſuch a civil Government, ſuch wholeſome Laws, ſuch a regular Conſtitution, and above all under ſuch a Governour, ſuch a Thing ſhould be found. Again, 'tis yet more melancholly to reflect, that this ſhould be found among our Teachers, among the Clergy, and at laſt among the ſuperiour Clergy——It is alſo ſurprizing, that the Diſciplinary Part of the *Engliſh* Church ſhould be thus remiſsly manag'd, that whereas we all know, Proviſion is ſufficiently made by the Diſcipline of the Church of *England*, for the correcting the Diſorders of the Clergy, thoſe, who have the Government of the Church, ſhould hold the Reins ſo ſlack, and let ſuch black Things as theſe paſs unpuniſh'd.

Nor am I at all expoſing the Church of *England* in this, I am ſure it is far from my Deſign, *let them take it as they pleaſe, That I am wholly unconcern'd about*—— But on the contrary, if any Man aſks me, why I have expos'd this Story, *I anſwer*, purely and ſincerely, *as far as in me lies*, to provoke the Heads of the Church to enter ſeriouſly into ſome Methods, to remove theſe abominable Things from among them, that their Enemies may have no Room to reproach their Diſcipline and Government, and to give ſcandalous black Lifts of their debauch'd Clergy; if this be not a Ser-

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vice to the Church in their Eſteem, I am ſorry for their Eye Sight.

In ſhort, Gentlemen of the Church of *England*, if you will bear a Word or two from one that is a Friend to your Reformation, take it thus; The Church of *England* will never maintain her Name in the World, keep up her Reputation, defend her ſelf againſt the *Diſſenters*, and ſtand her Ground againſt Schiſm and Errors, till ſhe revives her Diſcipline, and reſtores the Morals of her Clergy——— This Nation will never make any ſubſtantial Progreſs in the Work of Reformation, whether of Religion or of Manners, till the Miniſters in the Church, and the Magiſtrates in the State will be pleas'd to reform *themſelves*, or are reform'd by their Superiors.

To hear a Miniſter of the Church Blaſpheme that Bleſſed Name, by which he is, *or pretends to be* call'd; *to ſee* a Preacher of Righteouſneſs be a Belcher of Oaths, a Guide to Salvation be a Defier and Inſulter of Heaven; *to hear* a Miniſter ſwear and curſe—*Thou that preacheſt that Men ſhould not ſteal, DOST THOU ſteal? Thou that ſayeſt that Men ſhould not commit Adultery, DOST THOU commit Adultery? Thou that abhorreſt Idols, DOST THOU commit Sacrilege; for the Name of GOD is blaſphemed among the Gentiles THOROW YOU?* Rom. 2. 21, 22, 23.

Is this the Way to honour the Vocation, and lead by the Hand the dark World into the Light of Truth? ——— Is this the Way to preſerve or ſecure the Church? No, nor will the Church of *England* be ever ſecur'd, till her Diſcipline is reſtor'd, and ſome new Courſe taken to put her Canon ſtrictly in Execution againſt all Manner of Vice, but eſpecially among her Clergy: To ſay a Church can be ſafe, when ſhe is not reform'd in Morals, *I mean her Miniſters*; when her Inſtructors are debauch'd, when the Sons of the Church become Sons of *Sodom*, and Guides to the Devil, is to ſay, what we have very little Ground to hope for——— A Miniſter of the Goſpel, by how much the more Honourable he is by Office, Sacred in Perſon, and Reverend in Name, by ſo much the more odious and contemptible he grows, when he abandons his Morals, and gives himſelf a Looſe in Debauchery—Nay, as they are Men moſt capable of ſerving GOD and their Country when ſober, and preſcrib'd ſo; I think, when they *give themſelves up*, they prove the worſt of Men—They turn the Diametrical Oppoſites to the Employ they are dedicated to, they grow Factors of Hell, and Stock Jobbers for the Devil; they drive Men to Deſtruction, and damn more by their Example, than they recover by their Doctrine——— I will not ſay, but a wicked Miniſter may by his Preaching be the Means of converting a Sinner; this may be; but we are too ſure, that he is the Cauſe, humanly ſpeaking, of the hardening many——— *By the firſt*, like an unſkilful Horſeman, he opens the Gate on the wrong ſide, lets other Folks through, and ſhuts himſelf out; *but by the laſt*, he holds Hell-Gate open, and like the Bell-Wether Sheep jumping in himſelf, the hare-brain'd Flock all jump in after him.

Let us now make Parallels; Do other Churches do thus, who have any Concern among them for the Honour of Religion in the World? Not the *Proteſtant* Churches abroad, not the *Dutch*, not the *Diſſenters* at home, not the *Scots Preſbyterian* Church: No, Gentlemen, you that have endeavour'd to blacken her all you can, reproach'd her Judicatories, and contemn'd her Miniſtry——— You have not once attempted to blame her Diſcipline; you have pretended they have depos'd Men innocent, *tho' that is not made out either*, but you cannot pretend the Guilty are conniv'd at, and her Clergy let run out into Exceſſes and Immoralities.

Now let no Man miſtake me, I am not here making Compariſons of the Lives and Converſation of the Church of *England* Clergy with the *Diſſenters*, or with the Clergy of the Church of *Scotland*, *black Liſts are none of my Deſign*, nor do I delight to be raking in the Lay Stall of Human Infirmity; Miniſters are Men of like Paſſions with our ſelves, ſubject to Crime and Excurſions as well as other Men, and ought to be puniſh'd as ſeverely, or indeed more ſeverely than other Men, for by how much more they are exemplar in their Practices. But this Compariſon I muſt make, *viz.* That, *it ſeems to me*, there are the moſt vicious Clergymen ſuffer'd, and the feweſt puniſh'd in the Church of *England*, of

of any Church or Society of Religions in these Parts of the World, take it in Proportion to the Number, and this is not owing to a Defect of Power or a Defect of Law, but a meer Defect of Practice. The Discipline of the Church of *England* has a true Edge to cut off all these Scandals, and if executed vigorously and exactly, is as well calculated for the Restraint of Vice, both in Teacher and Hearer; but what's the Law without an executive Application? What's the Discipline of the Church, unless the Diocesan puts the Spirit of Reformation into those, whose Business it is to restore that Discipline to its full Exercise? I am not speaking to the Dishonour of the Church of *England* at all, 'tis the Honour of the Church of *England* to have a very good Discipline; my Proposal is, to enquire whose Fault it is, that this *very good Discipline* is not put into a vigorous Exercise, that Vice and abominable Scandals may be purg'd out of this Nation, *beginning at the Sanctuary*.

When we have formerly spoken of the Looseness, Prophaneness and Immorality of the inferior Clergy in *England*, the general Answer is, *Well, well*, your Dissenting Ministers are so, and so too; and so IF THEY CAN, *and much Pains it costs them to search*, but find a Man of Crime among the *Dissenters*, they post him up to excuse their own—— But really, Gentlemen, this is not the just Enquiry——Will you come to this?—— Who has the most vicious, wicked, debauched Clergymen, that are openly known to be such, permitted, conniv'd at, and remaining uncensur'd among them——It is not a Reproach to any Church or Body of Professors, to have Hypocrites, and Wolves in Sheeps Cloathing among them, any more than it was a Reproach to the Twelve Apostles, that one of them was a Devil; but the Reproach is, when this Devil is known, and yet suffer'd, embrac'd and let go unpunish'd.

On this Head, we may challenge the Adversaries of the Church of *Scotland* to tell us, where are the Men of Crime and Scandal among their Ministers, who remain so uncensur'd, and who are not brought immediately to Justice? No, Gentlemen, I assure you, there is not one Minister in the whole Church, who dares give himself a Loose in Vice; he would immediately be brought before the proper Judges of the Bounds, be gradually, and according to Fact rebuk'd, censur'd, suspended, depriv'd, depos'd—— No Minister in *Scotland* could say in one of their Presbyteries, *G—d d—n the People, if they would not go to such a Church, they might go the D...l*; He would be a Minister in that Church but a very few Hours after it.

The Want of Discipline in a Church must certainly expose that Church to fatal Inconveniencies——What would all the Preaching of the Disciples have been, and what Impression would it have made, if *Judas* had not been cast out from among them? Ye complain of Schismaticks and Dissenting from the Establish'd Church—— I tell ye freely, Gentlemen, you are the Men that make *Dissenters*, that establish them, and encrease their Number; you, who having the Rod of Discipline in your Hands, suffer the vicious Lives of your own Clergy to make the Holy Things of GOD odious to the People by their scandalous Behaviour, and take no Regard to punish it; These are the Men, who like the Sons of *ELI*, *make Men abhor the Offering of the Lord*, 1 Sam. 2. 17. —And what said Old *Bishop ELI* to them? Truly Nothing; but, *nay my Sons, for it is no good Report that I hear of you*, &c. v. 24. and the rest of that Chapter will tell you, how GOD resented his Coldness of Discipline, and punish'd it upon *ELI* himself, as well as he did the Crime upon his Sons—Whereas, *Phineas the Son of* Eleazar, *who in his warmer Zeal stabb'd* Zimri *and* Cosbi *in the Act of their prophane Love, has the most remarkable Blessing of a Covenant of Peace, and an Everlasting Priesthood immediately from GOD Himself*, Numbers 25 13.

The Application is short, The *Reverend Father*, who being offended with the Carriage of the Monster we are now talking of, gave him a Reproof, as I noted in my last, *Viz. That he carry'd it more like a Captain of a Fireship than a Presbytery of* ——— *He acts just like Old* ELI, with a *Nay my Son, it is no good Report to hear you swear and curse*

curse at this Rate in the very Chapter-House, &c. But had he according to his Duty, and with *Phineas*, *in the Zeal of the Lord*, laid the Wretch by the Heels, profecuted him by Law, and ſpued him out of the Church—as he deſerv'd, he had had the Bleſſing of *Phineas*, and perhaps might have done for the Church of *England*, as GOD teſtifies of *Phineas* about the Children of *Iſrael*, v. 10. Phineas *has turn'd my Wrath away from the Children of* Iſrael, (while he was zealous for my Sake among them) *that I conſum'd them not in my Jealouſie.*

But while ſuch Wretches as theſe are ſpread over this Nation, and open Vice and Prophaneneſs reign among the Clergy unreſtrain'd, you need charge no Body with Deſigns againſt the Church, it cannot, it is impoſſible it ſhould ſtand; for you pull it down with your own Hands.

No Man, that has any Reſpect for the Church of *England* can forbear, but with Concern to move the Fathers of the Church to take ſuch Caſes as theſe into Conſideration, leſt when the Judgments of GOD fall upon them; this lies at the Door as a Cauſe, which GOD aſſigns for the Puniſhment of *ELI*, 1 *Sam.* 3. 13. *I will judge his Houſe for ever, becauſe HIS SONS made themſelves vile, AND HE reſtrain'd them not.*

ADVERTISEMENTS.

ALL Thoſe that will be included in the Liſt of the Debts of the United Creditors of King *Charles* and King *James*, are deſir'd forthwith to enter their Subſcriptions, for that they will petition but for a Tenth Part of their Funds towards their ſaid Debts, and will give in all the Reſt to find Favour with the Parliament——— Their Place of Meeting is as formerly in *Old Pallace Yard*, where all thoſe who have ſubſcrib'd are deſir'd to meet on *Thurſday* the 20th of this Inſtant *January*, at Two of the Clock to ſettle the Petition.

This Day is Publiſh'd,

THE Second Edition of the Tryal and Conviction of the *French Committee*, Appointed for the Management of the Nacional Charity to the Poor *French Refugees*, But fully Proved *Guilty* of *Mal-Adminiſtration*, and very *foul Practices*, by their own *Account*, Publiſh'd in 1707. By *My Lord Chancellour*'s Order. Written Originally in *French* by Monſieur *Narbouel*, one of the Diſtributors, and now Done into *Engliſh* with the *Addition* of a Preface, a Poſtſcript, and a Sharp Memorial Preſented to the late King by 77 *French* Miniſters, againſt the *Committee*. To this Second Edition is added a full Anſwer to their late Advertiſement of *Jan.* 4, in the *Poſt-Man*. Sold by *J. Morphew* near *Stationers-Hall*, and by the Bookſellers of *London* and *Weſtminſter*.

Theſe are to give Notice,

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